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BILL VASCONI

MR. VASCONI: I'm Bill Vasconi. My pleasure to talk to you. I want to thank the panel for hearing us out. I also want you to know that even though I may stand in opposition to a lot of our Nevada delegation, I do appreciate your views. I hope you appreciate mine. I do like trivia once in a while and I'll probably throw some of that in.

I would like to say that our first acting governor of this State of Nevada, I'm sure his brother would like the proceedings that have been going on in the last eight, ten, twelve years. Orrin Clemens was not only our acting governor, he was our controller, our state treasurer, et cetera. He tried to get a job for his brother when the first governor of Nevada who came from New York, which was Nye, but Orrin couldn't get his brother a job. After a while, he didn't need one. His name was Samuel, Samuel Clemens, Mark Twain.

Nevada Test Site, been a lot of employment out there. Paid for a lot of taxes, a lot of houses, a lot of college educations, a lot of divorces. Once upon a time, there was some 11,000 people working out there. Now we're down to a bare minimum. I speak to you today, Bill Vasconi, Las Vegas, Nevada, a 36-year resident. Seventeen of those years have been on the Nevada Test Site, first as a radiological monitor technician, then as a construction worker.

I am associated with the AF of L-CIO. I'm also associated with the Nuclear Waste Study Committee. In turn, I'm associated with the NTS Development Association as a board of directors for issues and development at this test site. I'm also involved with the Historical Foundation trying to preserve some of the past of the Nevada Test Site. I bring that up to you, but I'm speaking as a concerned citizen.

1 YMP is being built with today's technologies, today's metal, today's knowledge. Well, I give our educational system a hell of a lot more credit. I believe that in the years to come in the future, young people of this nation, a hundred years from now, 200 years from now, 300 years from now will have a hell of a lot better handle on this than we do. YMP, some folks see it as a stewardship of nuclear -- excuse me. Renewable energy source. You'd be hard-pressed to convince this old man that coal reserves, oil reserves are going to be around in 300 years. Reprocessing the nuclear waste, it may be a renewable energy source.

One thing about the project, you know we've gone through a lot of things over the years, but as it stands right now, it's recognized not in the viability assessment in the EIS, it's going to be left open. It's going to be monitored for temperature, water, et cetera. It's also going to be retrievable if something goes wrong. It makes it a lot more acceptable to folks like me. Up to 300 years, longer if necessary.

But we being Nevadans, a good portion that I don't think on a national basis. As a matter of fact, Nevada, Clark County, fifty percent of the people in Clark County, over a million, a million and a quarter, fifty percent of those people have been here less than ten years. They're more worried about schools, roads, water, housing, jobs, crime, the weather at the lake, what's on TV. About number fourteen is Yucca Mountain. It don't make them bad. Public participation's always been bad. I recognize a lot of folks in this audience that I've had other meetings with. I like to go to the rural counties. God gave me two ears and one mouth. I try to listen twice as hard as I talk. It's necessary. Those people have real concerns.

2 Safety, risk perception. There's a murder every two days in Clark County. There's a rape every nine hours. There's a car stolen every forty minutes. Risk, we have risk. Two-thirds of the people in Nevada don't want the repository, two-thirds. Ninety-eight percent of them think it's going to come. It's a brute. That's only fair. We're all concerned. We all have our health and safety concerns. We have our environmental safeguards that we want to see.

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I know one thing. Transportation's a real issue. DOE has remained reactive instead of proactive. Got to change our ways. It's not reasonable to consider the fact that you're going to have transportation through the Las Vegas Valley where they use the -- the new beltways, et cetera. There are better ways to transport that nuclear waste by rail, by heavy-haul truck in our rural areas. Yes, there's need for studies for impact, impact studies. Rural and in -- in the Clark County area.

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Equity concerns. And believe me, there are equity concerns. We haven't pursued the equity concerns. I've got a wish list, and I know my time's about to run out. I will speak again tonight, but there are equity concerns to be considered. The benefits, the benefits that could be realized at Yucca Mountain if the timing was right, if the folks were right, if the folks were listening. I've got funding to AULG, affected units of local government.

MR. LAWSON: You've got thirty seconds, please.

MR. VASCONI: From the -- from the nuclear waste fund for local impact of environmental studies to include credible oversight issue funding. Equity entitlement benefits: A world class environmental and energy research center at the University of Nevada; federal funding for a state of the art emergency response program; water right issues for Southern Nevada growth; transition and release of Nevada's federal lands to the state were eighty-six percent federal; funding for Southern Nevada's infrastructure and transportation systems; a railroad line between the north and Southern Nevada; Nevada university research and educational funding; and last but not least, and in conclusion, a stewardship trust fund for grants to the state and county identities for site and use of YMP as studies conclude, as a repository during emplacement operations and as a monitored study area and as a closure equity.

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I'm one of the folks that think it's a national issue. I believe it will work. Yes, we have some things to do. Yes, we have some considerations, but keep in mind we have fifty years of expertise at the Nevada Test Site. We have the mountain. We have the management and we have the manpower to do that job right. Let the evaluation site characterization of Yucca Mountain continue. Thank you very much.